

Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education  
333 S. Beaudry Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

June 22, 2020

Dear Honorable School Board Members,

On behalf of Green Dot Public Schools California I want to thank and commend you for bringing to the forefront the important issue of the use of Los Angeles School Police on District facilities.

As you know, our nation has a moral obligation to tend to age-old wounds that manifest themselves in systems of discrimination. We, as system leaders in public education, have a unique responsibility to do right by the families and students we serve. We are especially sensitive to the needs of the Black community for whom the historic and ongoing legacies of slavery and Jim Crow are all too potent across this country. Moments like these provide the collective will and urgency for meaningful reform.

As the District is aware, our organization has consistently emphasized the importance of deep and meaningful relationships between adults and students on campus as the primary mechanism for ensuring a safe environment for students to learn. We appreciate the District's ability to grow and evolve its approach to safety, as evidenced by the Board's plan to eliminate the random metal detection (wandering) policy the District has had in place for many years.

We urge the District to support Board Member Garcia's resolution and significantly reduce the use of Los Angeles School Police on its campuses. We also support Board Member Garcia's proposal to repurpose the funds for the Student Equity Needs Index for distribution to the highest need schools in support of African American students.

We, too, have reflected on our practices and recently decided not to renew our contract with the LA County Sheriff Department to have a School Resource Deputy at Locke College Prep Academy. We understand how difficult a decision like this is, as the Locke community recently went through the same process. If the Board approves the resolution on Tuesday's agenda to invest in alternative safety strategies, it would be an historic accomplishment for us to celebrate together.

Removing the presence of law enforcement officers at Locke will not compromise the safety of our students, school staff and community members. In fact, the foundation we built over the past 20 years at our schools has taught us where better investments can be made to ensure student safety and success.

- We have prioritized deep community relationships and work with local partners to provide preventative services, safe passage and conflict mediation as we work with groups like the Watts Gang Task Force, We Care Outreach and others.
- At Locke, we have also invested significantly in mental health supports with 6 counselors, 3 school psychologists, 1 clinical social worker, and 1 case manager for 1400 students.
- We have also invested in an African American Achievement Specialist and programs like See a Man, Be a Man to amplify the talents of our Black Scholars at Locke.

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During a time when resources are particularly tight, we urge you to consider what is best for students and invest in students who need as much support as we can offer. We look forward to the opportunity to work as a partner with the Board as you develop alternative plans for LAUSD campuses, particularly campuses where charter public schools are co-located.

Sincerely,



Dr. Cristina de Jesus  
Chief Executive Officer and President  
Green Dot Public Schools California

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